

I've heard there are studies showing cats and ferrets becoming infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. Do I need to worry about my own pets?

Experimental studies conducted in a laboratory setting indicate that cats and ferrets might be able to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 and transmit the virus to other animals. In a natural setting, it appears that it is rare that domestic animals are readily infected with SARS-CoV-2; however a few cases have been reported in the United States.

I heard there have been dogs and cats, and even a tiger, that have tested positive. Is my pet at risk?

A very small number of pets, including dogs and cats, have been reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 after close contact with people with COVID-19. There have been no reports of pets becoming sick with COVID-19 in the United States. To date, there is no evidence that pets can

spread the virus to people.

The first case of an animal testing positive for COVID-19 in the United States was a tiger with a respiratory illness at a zoo in New York City. Samples from this tiger were taken and tested after several lions and tigers at the zoo showed signs of respiratory illness. Public health officials believe these large cats became sick after being exposed to a zoo employee who was actively shedding virus.

I am ill with COVID-19, but my pet needs to see a veterinarian. What should I do?

Contact your veterinarian to see how they wish to proceed. They may be able to help you by telephone or video conference, or they may require that a healthy person bring the pet in for evaluation. In order to best protect their staff, they will likely have special instructions for you and your pet upon arrival, such as keeping the pet in the car until time of examination; asking you to fill out paperwork from your car; and processing payment for services by telephone.

I have heard of “coronavirus” infections in dogs, cats, and horses, and even a vaccine in dogs. Are these contagious to people?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Similar but different coronavirus species cause several common diseases in domestic animals which are not contagious to people. Many dogs, for example, are vaccinated for another species of coronavirus (Canine Coronavirus) as puppies. However, this vaccine does not cross protect for COVID-19. There is no vaccine for COVID-19 for animals or humans at this time.

If I need to be hospitalized for COVID-19, what do I need to do for my animals?

A family member, friend, or neighbor should be asked to care for your animals while you are hospitalized and until your isolation period has come to an end. Alternatively, you can contact your veterinarian or an animal boarding facility to coordinate boarding your pet while you are in the hospital.

Is my pet safe to be around other pets? Should I practice social distancing?

It is recommended that pets and other animals from different households be prevented from commingling at this time, out of an abundance of caution. If your pet is showing signs of illness, you should isolate it from all other pets in your household. When walking your dog, practice social distancing by keeping at least 6 feet between you and other people. If you cannot maintain social distancing, follow Delaware's guidance on wearing a face covering. Even though people might not feel sick or show symptoms, they can spread the virus.

What signs or symptoms would an animal with possible COVID-19 have?

Although there have been only a few reports of pets becoming sick with COVID-19 in the United States, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with their animals. If your pet shows any signs of illness, including respiratory or gastrointestinal symptoms, contact your veterinarian.

If my pet was around someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19, should I be worried?

Since there have been a few confirmed reports of pets becoming sick with COVID-19 in the United States, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals. Contact your veterinarian if your pet displays any signs of illness.

Can I give COVID-19 to my pet?

Although there have been a few reports of pets becoming sick with COVID-19 in the United States, this is a new virus and it is not fully understood. For this reason, it is recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals, just as you would restrict your contact with other people. There is some indication that pets can contract the virus from people in the household who have been sick with COVID-19. Out of an abundance of caution, persons ill with COVID-19 should have another member of your household or business take care of feeding and otherwise caring for any animals, including pets, whenever possible. If you have a service animal or you must care for your animals, including pets, wear a cloth face mask; don't pet, share food, kiss, or hug them, or allow your pet to lick you; and wash your hands before and after any contact with your pet, service animal, and their supplies. You should

not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home.

Can I get COVID-19 from my pet?

Currently there is no evidence to suggest any animals, including pets or livestock, can spread COVID-19 infection to people.